



Agriculture

A sharp drop in fertilizer sales in the South is accepted as an indication that the southern farmer is in earnest in his campaign to reduce the cotton acreage next year.

Gas engine specialists of the Department of Agriculture urge those having trouble with engines to follow a definite system in locating the difficulty. Complete information on the systematic study of ignition and fuel systems and the effects of cold weather on motors can be obtained free from the department.

The sum of \$1,012,000 has been asked for improvements in New York Harbor.

With the advice and assistance of the National Research Council the Crop Protection Institute has been organized. This is an association for studying insect and plant diseases. Improved methods of fighting the pests of agriculture are to be sought.

Japan is enlisting German skill as a means of saving her war-born industries. It is believed that the combination of German scientific and technical skill and Japanese cheap labor will work to advantage.

California lemon growers are asking Congress to keep out Italian lemons. The western growers claim they cannot compete with the price of the imported fruit.

An American firm in San Salvador, which recently imported a number of American tractors, held a very successful demonstration a short time ago in the presence of the president of the republic and a number of his friends.

More than twenty American steamships are idle because of the condition of ocean transportation. Only a marked revival in foreign trade, it is said, will prevent the withdrawing of many more vessels.

Arkansas passenger rates have been ordered raised to the level prevailing in interstate commerce.

Many southern states report that the Negroes are returning to the plantations. The high wages of the cities drew them from the farming communities during the war.

In an endeavor to assist American firms which desire to export their products to Mexico, the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has collected a large amount of trade information which is available to interested manufacturers.

The October consumption of wool, the last month on which figures are available, amounted to 38,510,000 or about 31,000,000 pounds less than for October, 1919.

The total value of automobiles and accessories exported from the United States in 1920 will amount to at least \$365,000,000.

A steamship line has been established out of Halifax for Brazilian and other South American ports.

The railroads of the country have been divided into three classes by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Class I includes lines having an annual operating revenue of more than \$1,000,000; Class II, lines with a revenue between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000 and Class III, any carriers having revenues which amount to less than \$100,000.

There are almost 2,000 farmers' mutual fire insurance companies in the United States. They carry a total risk of \$6,000,000,000 at an average cost of 25 cents per \$100 a year.

Kurt Lasswitz, a famous German engineer, claims that by subjecting coal to pressure and heat he has produced a liquid which, mixed with hydrogen gas, gives off far more heat units when burned than does coal. Experiments are being carried out for the purpose of determining whether the liquid fuel can be used successfully by large manufacturing plants.

Thirty-five patents were obtained by the Department of Agriculture. All of the inventions were dedicated to the use of the public.

The Three Arts

Manufacture

The Director of the Census has announced the following facts concerning Maine farms: the count shows 48,227 farms, containing 5,425,968 acres of which 1,977,329 acres are improved land. Since 1910 the number of farms has decreased 19.6 and the improved acreage 16.2 per cent. There are 48,214 white farmers of which 43,830 are native-born.

The former Russian transport Rogday has been purchased by the Pere Marquette Railroad and will be placed in service on the Great Lakes.

Governor Coolidge, vice president-elect, favors the consolidation of all New England railroads in one system.

The Farm Bureau movement is growing very rapidly in Texas. At the present rate of increase, the state organization will have 100,000 members before the end of its first year.

Packages for Mexico, with the exception of motion picture films and newspapers, will not be accepted when their bulk prevents their inclosure in United States post office mail sacks.

The Minnesota Experiment Station reports that there need be no hesitancy in using wheat of the 1920 spring crop which was affected by black stem rust, for seeding purposes. If the wheat is bright in color and the kernels average nearly as heavy as the small plump seed of a normal crop it is considered suitable for seed.

According to F. C. Shenehon, former dean of engineering at the University of Minnesota, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence tide-water project would mean the saving to farmers of the Northwest of five cents a bushel on all grain shipped to over-sea markets by this route.

The Department of Agriculture has begun work on a census which will show the amount and value of farm equipment purchased during 1920.

The plant breeding division of the agricultural department of the University of Illinois has produced a new wheat, which outyields its ancestor, Turkey Red, by six bushels to the acre on a five-year average.

The Highways

It required a great national catastrophe to awaken the American public to the inadequacy of our transportation facilities and to the fact that we must depend largely upon our highways, in conjunction with motor vehicles, when a sudden expansion in transportation is essential.

Our experiences during the last three years have clearly demonstrated that the failure earlier to inaugurate a sound road improvement program has retarded the effective development of one of our most vital national requirements. The use of the motor vehicle for highway transportation has increased tremendously within a short period. In 1906 only 48,000 motor vehicles were registered in the United States. By 1914 the number had risen to 1,700,000 while the registrations now total nearly 8,000,000 exclusive of motor cycles. The actual vehicle-mile use of our roads, it is estimated, has increased more than 500 per cent in strictly agricultural communities and more than 1,000 per cent near the large centers of population. These figures indicate the extent to which community and short haul transportation will be served by better highways.—Department of Agriculture Report.



Transportation

Texas led all states in November oil production. It brought in 9,489,000 barrels.

Kansas leads all states in the production of alfalfa. More than one million acres were devoted to alfalfa in Kansas last year. Nebraska was a close second, being only 17,000 acres behind her neighbor.

New Zealand farmers have found co-operative associations to be very successful. Two strong associations do an annual business of \$34,000,000 and handle practically everything their members need, from agricultural machinery down to pins and needles.

The price of raw cotton has dropped 60 per cent in the last eight months.

Six hundred thousand topographic maps, showing the altitude of every part of the country, have been sold to the general public by the Geological Survey, Washington. Index sheets giving the list of maps published may be obtained free.

The Department of Agriculture publishes the result of a number of studies on the cost of producing milk. Those interested should ask for Department Bulletin 919, "Unit Requirements for Producing Milk in Western Washington."

Wholesale prices of commodities, says the Department of Labor, were lower in November than any time since the war.

The supreme court of the state of Washington has upheld the award of the state welfare board fixing the minimum wage for women employed in hotels and restaurants at \$18 a week. It is said that this is the forerunner of a movement to raise the present average minimum wage of all women workers.

Western growers of sugar beets announced at a recent gathering that they would ask refineries to split profits with them on a 50-50 basis. Unless this is agreed to the growers say they will raise no more beets.

Missouri and Kansas farmers report a serious shortage of live stock. Farmers who have produced large amounts of feed find no market for the feed and have no cattle to consume it.

Poland hopes to be able to export 70,000 metric tons of sugar from its coming crop.

A Northern Michigan farmer reports a crop of 2,700 bushels of potatoes from 12 acres of new land. The land cost him \$12.50 an acre and his first crop had a value of \$2,160.

The annual report on mines and production in Alaska is under preparation by the Geological Survey. Accurate figures will not be available for four or five months.

Speakers before the meeting of the American Association of State Highway officials argued for limitation of the size and weight of trucks which are allowed to use public roads.

The freight traffic of the New York Central lines in 1920 was greater than that carried by all the railroads of England and France.

At the close of 1920 the United States had a trade balance in its favor of two and three-quarter billion dollars.

The United States Steel Corporation has announced the purchase of one of the largest manganese mines in South America.

Textile workers are preparing to urge a congressional inquiry of the whole textile business.

Information from Mexico is that instead of the 240,000 bale cotton crop which was hoped for, the yield will not run above 70,000 or 80,000 bales.

Kansas has adopted an amendment to its constitution which authorizes the state legislature to issue bonds or otherwise make appropriation for the purchase of land to be resold to farmers on long time. This is being done in the hope that thereby the tenantry of the farm lands will be somewhat lessened.